

Approved 2/18/25

Hamilton Township Planning Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
1/21/2025

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Chairman Mel Lebo.

Present: Mel Lebo, Chairman; Ira Bitner, Vice Chairman; Ronald L. Weidner; Lela Reichart; and Christine Myers.

Also Present: James Graham, Zoning Officer; Chad Clabaugh, Township Engineer; Andrew Merkel, Adams County Office of Planning & Development (ACOPD); and Megan Carper, Secretary/Treasurer.

Reorganization: The Commission held its annual reorganization.

Chairman: *Ronald L. Weidner made a motion to appoint Mel Lebo as Chairman, seconded by Ira Bitner. The motion carried **unanimously**.*

Vice Chairman: *Ronald L. Weidner made a motion to appoint Ira Bitner as Vice Chairman, seconded by Ira Bitner. **The motion carried unanimously.***

Motion to Adopt the Agenda: *Ira Bitner made a motion to adopt the agenda as written for Act 65, seconded by Christine Myers. **The motion carried unanimously.***

Minutes: The regular meeting minutes of December 17, 2024, were presented for approval. *Ronald L. Weidner made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2024, meeting, seconded by Ira Bitner. **The motion carried unanimously.***

New Business: There was no new business presented for discussion.

Old Business:

- **O'Brien Subdivision:** The Commission reviewed the O'Brien Subdivision Plan, which involves subdividing a two-acre lot from a larger tract. It was noted that the county review is still pending, and the applicant has not yet submitted the required fee. The Commission discussed the process for final approval and clarified that the 30-day review window does not begin until all required documents and payments are received. *Ira Bitner made a motion to table the O'Brien Subdivision approval until the next meeting, seconded by Ronald L. Weidner. **The motion carried unanimously.***
- **Pennwood Products:** Discussion continued on the Pennwood Products Land Development Plan, which includes a warehouse and a public street. The Commission noted that the applicant has not yet secured an NPDES permit (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System), a requirement for the project. Concerns were raised regarding the potential traffic impact and pedestrian safety, particularly in relation to the applicant's request for a sidewalk waiver. The Commission agreed that East Berlin Borough should be consulted. *Ronald L. Weidner made a motion to table this discussion, seconded by Ira Bitner. **The motion carried unanimously.***
- **Stormwater Management and Zoning Regulations (Pervious/Impervious Surfaces):** The Commission continued discussions on stormwater management and zoning regulations, specifically the impact of pervious and impervious surface requirements. *Ira Bitner made a motion to table this discussion, seconded by Ronald L. Weidner. **The motion carried unanimously.***
- **Cross Keys Intersection (Traffic Impact Studies/Corridor Study):** The Commission also discussed the Cross Keys Intersection Traffic Impact Study and the broader Cross Keys Corridor Study. *Lela Reichart made a motion to table this discussion, seconded by Ronald L. Weidner. **The motion carried unanimously.***
- **Ordinance Amendment Status/Completion:** The Planning Commission reviewed the codification status of township ordinances. *Lela Reichart made a motion to table this discussion, seconded by Ronald L. Weidner. **The motion carried unanimously.***

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- **Discussion: Updating the Description for the Commercial Zoning District:** A lengthy discussion was held regarding the future of commercial zoning in Hamilton Township, particularly concerning warehouse and trucking terminal developments. Ryan Fox presented a petition signed by 127 township residents opposing warehouse development in the Commercial Zoning District, citing concerns over traffic congestion, safety, and overall quality of life. He also noted that the township had incurred over \$60,000 in legal fees while opposing recent warehouse applications, emphasizing the financial burden on taxpayers. Nate Wolf, representing concerned residents, highlighted the regional traffic impact of large-scale warehousing and referenced a development in Carlisle where traffic projections doubled initial estimates, causing unanticipated congestion and infrastructure strain. He urged the township to take preemptive action to prevent similar issues in Hamilton Township. The discussion acknowledged the need to balance commercial growth with responsible planning, ensuring that any zoning changes align with township laws and regulations, including mandatory zoning requirements. A key proposal from Nate Wolf's clients was to remove warehousing and trucking terminals from the Commercial Zoning District and instead limit these uses to the Industrial Zone. A primary concern expressed by multiple residents was the significant increase in traffic at Cross Keys. There was also discussion about the potential long-term effects of different types of commercial developments. The Planning Commission, along with township officials, zoning officer and engineer, debated how various commercial businesses might impact traffic patterns differently than warehouses. Warehouse operations generate distinct traffic patterns compared to retail or mixed-use developments, which complicates infrastructure planning and road safety considerations. It was determined by all parties that further discussion is necessary to identify the best path forward for the township. The Planning Commission will conduct a comprehensive review of commercial zoning regulations, including building size restrictions, traffic impact studies, and setback requirements, to ensure that future development aligns with township infrastructure capacity and community priorities. Residents were strongly encouraged to provide input, as community feedback plays a crucial role in shaping the zoning amendments and future development regulations. After a thorough discussion, the following motions were made: *Mel Lebo made a motion to recommend to the Board of Supervisors the initiation of a Curative Amendment Process to review and update zoning regulations for the Commercial, Rural Commercial, Mixed-Use, and Industrial Zoning Districts, seconded by Ira Bitner. **The motion carried unanimously.** Mel Lebo made a motion to review amendments to the commercial zoning ordinance, seconded by Ira Bitner. **The motion carried unanimously.***

Public Comments:

- One resident pointed out that another resident, who had to leave the meeting early, had previously expressed opposition to the warehouse at Cross Keys.

Township Engineer Comments: No further comments.

ACOPD Comments: No further comments.

Zoning Officer Comments: No further comments.

Member Comments: No further comments.

Township Supervisor Comments: Jeremy Smith: I want to thank everybody for coming out, and I hope all these people continue to come out and support this whole process because I'd like to see these types of discussions every meeting.

Adjournment: *A motion was made by Ira Bitner to adjourn the meeting at 10:12 PM, seconded by Ronald L. Weidner. **The motion carried unanimously.***

Respectfully submitted.

Megan Carper
Secretary/Treasurer